

## **August 2011 Overview**

### **Kings canyon Backcountry Trail Crew**

#### **Dave Villarino: Supervisor**

August has been a big month for us here in Kings Canyon, a month of change, growth and acceptance for the crew. The month started with a spike to Deadman Canyon where Jon, Chelsea, Efrain and Kyle Martin maintained Deadman Canyon and Avalanche Pass, while the rest of the crew finished brushing up to Scaffold Meadow and the Roaring River ranger station, where we spent time learning about the area from Cindy, the Roaring River ranger for 9 years. and copied down locations of future destinations from her extensive maps. After the spike we were informed by our new crew foreman, Adam Zamastil, that it was time to move to our next camp at Scaffold Meadow for a week and then on to final location, Grand Palace, sitting under the beautiful Whaleback in Cloud Canyon. At Scaffold Lisa, Erik, Joe and Elyscia spent the week repairing drift fences, while Cedric, Efrain, Jason and Adam blasted open a creek crossing in Brewer Creek so our stock could reach us in Grand Palace. The rest of the crew finished brushing up Cloud Canyon. After our week at Scaffold we packed up our things and moved to our final camp 123 miles into the backcountry at Grand Palace. Upon arriving at Grand Palace we were greeted by Kings Canyon trail boss Dave Karplus and gained temporary new crew member bio technician Patrick Rizzo to help us with our upcoming re-routes in Big Wet Meadow. Half the crew began working on the re-route immediately, while the other half maintained the trail up to 12,000' Colby Pass. On the way home from the maintenance run, corpsmembers Cedric Cunningham and Kyle Martin discovered a burning log that threatened to spread. Along with the rest of the maintenance crew, Joe, Elyscia, Erik, Carson, Lisa, Efrain and Chelsea they managed to stop the six-foot wall of flames by chaining water bottles and bladders, and using their shovels to smother the flames. After a few drift fences were repaired the next week the whole crew began working on the Big Wet Meadow re-route and rehabilitation and will continue to do so until completed. The project is a full circle for us because it includes everything we have learned this season and then some, blasting, drilling, sawing, treading, brushing and plenty of rock work. So far, so good!

Weekends have been spent cross-countrying over talus fields and ridges to end up on peaks and lakes and gain further love and understanding of this beautiful park that has become our home. Hot spots have been Deadman Canyon, Colby Lake, Big Bird Lake, The Tablelands, Ranger Meadow, The Sphinx Lakes, Mt Palmer, Avalanche Pass and Screwball Meadow.

**Curriculum:** The month started off with a life-size game of Clue, created by Chelsea Saeland which led corpsmembers all over camp in search of various clues. Highlights from the game were Kyle Miraz singing "Hit me baby one more time" in the sump, Erin Basham smothering a cricket with her tongue and many disgusting treats for various crewmembers. We also had a creatively led genetics class by Elyscia Letterman and now can kinda figure out why our eye color is the way it is. Our bodies truly got put to the test when Yoga extraordinaire Lisa Kolarsick led us through an easy Yoga class. Other classes include a game show by Erin Basham which tested all our knowledge on the environment and an

extreme game of zoo charades led by Laurel Reisman. It was an amazing month for classes that challenged our minds and bodies.